





EL 01-029

Nov 26, 2001

Ms. Debra Elofson, Executive Director  
South Dakota Public Utilities Commission  
State Capitol Building  
500 East Capitol Avenue  
Pierre, South Dakota 57501-5070

Jim Wilcox, Manager,  
Government & Regulatory Services  
500 West Russell Street  
P.O. Box 988  
Sioux Falls, SD 57101-0988  
Telephone (605) 339-8350 fax 612/573-9083  
internet - james.c.wilcox@xcelenergy.com

RECEIVED

NOV 27 2001

Re: New customer brochure

SOUTH DAKOTA PUBLIC  
UTILITIES COMMISSION

Dear Ms. Elofson:

Northern States Power Company d/b/a Xcel Energy ("Xcel Energy") hereby submits for filing a petition to update its new customer brochure.

The proposed changes will make the brochure consistent with the design used for South Dakota rate folders and other literature customers normally receive from the Company.

The content for the brochure remains the same as the current new customer brochure with the exception of the following items:

- the new Xcel Energy bill format replaces the old NSP bill format
- the ASK NSP program information has been removed because the program is no longer in existence
- with the exception of the back panel which contains mailing information, references to Northern States Power and NSP have been removed
- phone numbers have been updated, reflecting toll free numbers

These changes will help customers identify mailings from Xcel Energy while providing consistency in format and content. We respectfully request that this new brochure be approved by the Commission.

If anyone has any questions, please call me at 339-8350

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Jim Wilcox'.

Jim Wilcox

c. Mike Swenson

0162952



WELCOME TO XCEL ENERGY  
IN SOUTH DAKOTA

**Xcel Energy**  
NORTHERN STATE POWER

0164195.3



## WELCOME TO XCEL ENERGY

It's our pleasure to serve you as a customer, and we look forward to providing you with reliable, low-cost electricity. We've been providing energy services for our customers for more than 80 years.

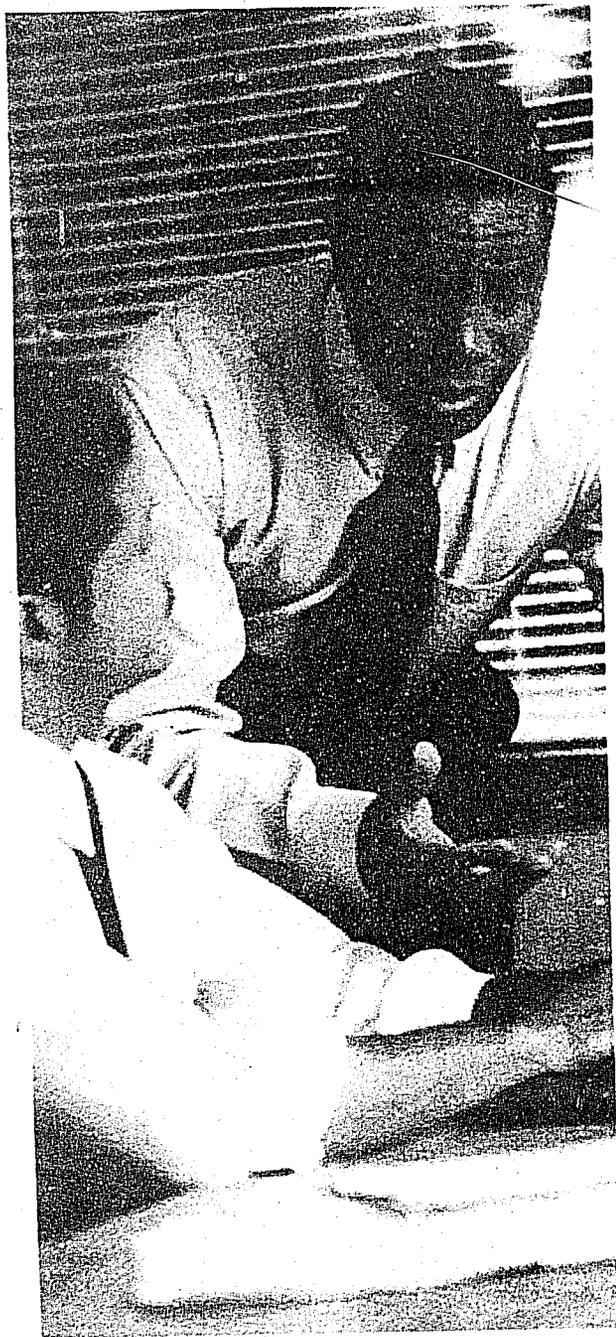
If you've been an Xcel Energy customer before, you might be familiar with some of the information in this booklet. But there's plenty of new information that will help you take advantage of Xcel Energy's programs and services for businesses, homeowners and apartment dwellers.

We've designed many of these programs to show you how to be more comfortable in your home for fewer dollars. Others help businesses save energy and money with a variety of energy services that include cash rebates, special electric rates and expert advice.

We can help you reduce your upfront capital costs and save on future energy bills by offering rebates for energy-efficient equipment. Call the Xcel Energy Business Solutions Center at 1-800-481-1700 for information about rooftop air conditioning, chiller, lighting and motor rebates.

This pamphlet also talks about safety, includes information to help you understand and pay your bill, and explains how to read your bill and meter.

We're glad you've made your home in Xcel Energy territory, or are in business here. If you still have questions after reading this booklet, call our customer Service Center at 1-800-895-1999. The back cover lists phone numbers to assist you.



**IN THIS BOOKLET, YOU'LL FIND...**

Paying your electric bill	1
If you're having trouble paying your bill	5
Electric prices	5
Reading your meter	6
To start or stop service	-
Conserving electricity	-
What to do when the lights go out	8
Remember to stay away from downed wires	8
Working safely around power lines	9
<i>Additional Important Information for Xcel Energy Customers</i>	
Your Xcel Energy bill	10
Deposit and guarantee requirements	12
City taxes	13
Late payment charge	13
Returned check charge	13
Collection procedures and reconnect charge	13
Disconnection notice	14
Disputed bills	16
Customer Service Center and Public Utilities Commission phone numbers	Back cover



### PAYING YOUR ELECTRIC BILL

The name printed on the envelope is the one Xcel Energy will bill for utility service. If it is incorrect, please call the Xcel Energy Customer Service Center or the Business Solutions Center.

You can pay your bill by mail, using the return envelope enclosed with your bill and including the top portion of the bill. Please give us five working days to receive the payment and credit your account. For convenient drop-off locations near you in Sioux Falls, call the Xcel Energy Service Center at 1-800-895-4999.

**Xcel Energy's AutoPay plan** is available for your convenience. You can authorize your financial institution to pay your Xcel Energy bill automatically every month. If you're interested, check with your financial institution or call the Customer Service Center or Business Solutions Center.

**Averaged Monthly Payment** smooths out your energy bill and makes them predictable, so you can plan for them. It helps you avoid high seasonal bills by spreading your payments over 12 months.

Signing up for Averaged Monthly Payment is simple. You can fill out the cards we send periodically with your bills or you can call the Customer Service Center.

### IF YOU'RE HAVING TROUBLE PAYING YOUR BILL

If paying your Xcel Energy bill is extremely difficult, call the Customer Service Center or the Business Solutions Center right away. We want to work with you to make sure you receive every possible assistance.

#### *HEATSHARE*

This program, administered by the Salvation Army, helps those in need to stay warm in winter through cash grants. Xcel Energy and its customers, employees and shareholders support HeatShare with personal donations and annual grants to cover expenses. If you or someone you know needs help, please call the Customer Service Center.

#### *Community Church Crisis Fund*

This community cooperative works to help customers retain their service when paying energy bills is difficult.

#### *South Dakota Winter Rule*

Under South Dakota's winter rule, from Nov. 1 to March 31, a residential customer is allowed an additional 30 days beyond the normal disconnection date to pay a past due bill. If you do get a disconnection notice, call the Customer Service Center as soon as possible to make arrangements on your bill.

#### *Med-Defer*

If loss of power will aggravate an existing medical condition, customers can extend the date of disconnection for a single 30-day period from the date of a physician's certificate or notice from a public health or social services official stating that a medical emergency exists.

### ELECTRIC PRICES

The South Dakota Public Utilities Commission (PUC) regulates investor-owned electric utilities, such as Xcel Energy, and determines the prices we charge our customers. A folder explaining the rates that apply to you accompanies this customer information booklet. We will send you a new rate schedule if these prices change.

## READING YOUR METER

Normally Xcel Energy will read your meter each month, as close as possible to 30-day intervals. If the reader cannot read your meter, we will leave a form with instructions so you can read your own meter and call in your reading. If you choose not to read your meter, or if the reading reaches us too late, we will estimate your bill based on your past use.

By learning to read your meter, you can track how much electricity you're using and estimate your use.

You can easily read an electric meter. Simply read from left to right on the dials, and record the number that each dial point has just passed. If the pointer is between two numbers, record the smaller one.



On the dials above, the reading is 97271. We determine the amount of energy you have used by subtracting the previous reading from the current one.

An electric meter registers your energy use in kilowatt-hours (kWh).

Xcel Energy must read your meter at least once a year. If you wish, we can send you an 11-month supply of the meter-reading forms. Or, you can provide us with a key so we can enter and read your meter when you aren't home. Call us at 1-800-895-4999 to make arrangements and learn about measures we take to ensure that your key is safe.

## METER TESTING

Xcel Energy conducts a regular program of periodic meter testing, and you are entitled to one free meter test a year. Additional testing may require you to pay a deposit, which we will refund if we find the meter is in error.



## TO START OR STOP SERVICE

You can start or stop service with a simple phone call to your local Customer Service Center. Xcel Energy charges the first time service is established or when it's reestablished. There is only one charge for any combination of electric service that Xcel Energy connects or reconnects at one time.

## CONSERVING ELECTRICITY

There are steps you can take to save energy and to help reduce your electric bill. They include caulking and weather stripping around doors and windows, lowering the setting on your thermostat in the winter and raising it in the summer, using cold or warm water for washing, and installing energy-efficient lighting.

Xcel Energy has programs to help both residential and business customers cut back on energy use, a discount for using equipment to control your energy use, attic insulation loans, energy-saving lighting and energy audits.

We invite you to call the Customer Service Center or the Business Solutions Center for more information

### WHAT TO DO WHEN THE LIGHTS GO OUT

If your lights go out, first check with your neighbors or nearby businesses to see if they have electricity. If you are the only one without power, the cause might be a blown fuse or circuit breaker, and you might be able to take care of the problem yourself. Keep extra fuses on hand. Xcel Energy will replace fuses and reset circuit breakers, but there is a charge for the service call.

If your entire neighborhood is without service, the problem is probably on Xcel Energy lines. Please let us know immediately by calling the Xcel Energy LIGHTS OUT number at 1-800-895-1999. We will send a repair crew as soon as possible to find the problem and repair it.

Power outages are not frequent, but they do happen, and you can be ready for them with a supply of candles, matches and a flashlight. A camping light might come in handy.

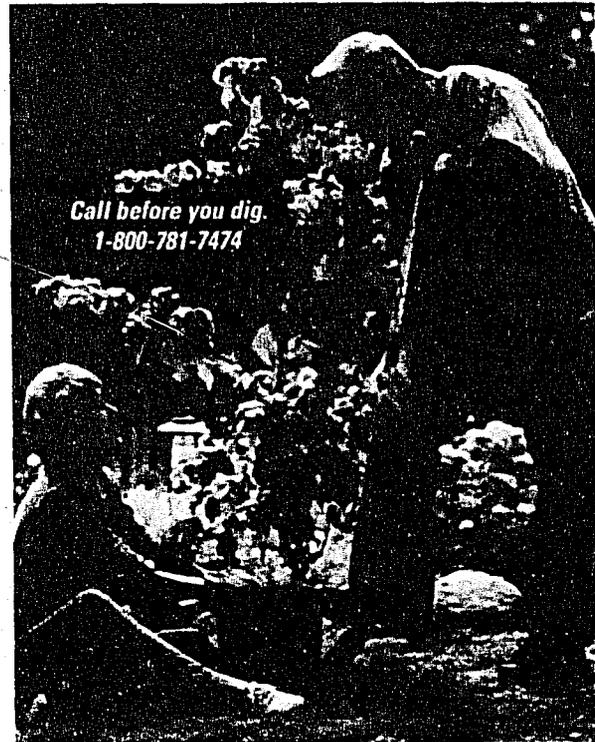
### REMEMBER TO STAY AWAY FROM DOWNED WIRES

Xcel Energy employees are on duty around the clock, seven days a week to keep your electricity on. Outages aren't usually lengthy. However, major storms can result in thousands of customers losing their service and hundreds of employees working to restore service.

Repair work is often difficult and must be done under adverse field conditions. It also is very complex receiving literally thousands of telephone calls, sorting them, determining probable causes and dispatching crews. After a severe storm, it might take days to restore service.

If it appears we won't be able to restore your service for an extended time, here are some ways you can help:

- Don't open refrigerators or freezers more often than necessary.
- Wrap refrigerators and freezers in heavy blankets to delay thawing.
- Turn off or unplug major appliances to help avoid a sudden surge of power when service is restored.
- Unplug appliances with transistors.
- Leave a light on so you'll know when your power is restored.



- If you see a downed electric wire, stay away from it and call Xcel Energy at 1-800-895-1999 to let us know where it is. It will help us to restore your electricity more quickly.

### WORKING SAFELY AROUND POWER LINES

Don't take power lines for granted. Be very careful when you work near or around them. Never allow a ladder, antenna, aluminum siding, rain gutters or other objects to touch electric wires. **Be Safe. Call Xcel Energy.**

When you're digging, call first to find out exactly where underground electric lines are located. Striking or severing lines with a shovel or other tool is dangerous. It could injure or even kill you. You also could interrupt service to your home. Damages caused by customers who do not call before digging are paid for by the customer. **In South Dakota, you can call South Dakota ONE-CALL at 1-800-781-7474 to locate underground utility lines.**

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## ADDITIONAL IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR XCEL ENERGY CUSTOMERS

On the following pages you will find information about your Xcel Energy bill and these important categories:

- Your Xcel Energy bill
- Deposit and guarantee requirements
- City taxes
- Late payment charge
- Returned check charge
- Collection procedures and reconnect charge
- Notices of disconnection
- Disputed bills
- Emergencies, Inquiries and Complaints

### YOUR XCEL ENERGY BILL

Once a month, Xcel Energy sends you a bill for the electricity you used during the billing period, generally every 30 days. You can expect to receive your bill about the same time each month. If the billing period is longer or shorter than normal, we calculate your bill on a prorated basis. Please have your account number ready if you call about your account or service.

Each bill contains the following information:

1. Your personal 10-digit account number
2. Date bill is due
3. Amount due
4. The Xcel Energy telephone number and mailing address if you have questions about your bill
5. Kind of service
6. Amount of previous month's balance
7. Amount paid on previous month's balance
8. Balance as of current billing date
9. The cost of Xcel Energy electricity you used this month
10. Amount of other authorized charges, such as HeatShare pledge
11. The current bill plus any balance remaining from previous bills
12. Location of special messages
13. Comparison of energy use and weather
14. Your meter number

**Xcel Energy** Your Account Number: 1 0000-000-0000

Date Due: 2 10-00-00    Payment Due: 3 1000.00    Amount Due: 3 There You!

LOCAL RETURN ADDRESS: JOHN R DOE, 1234 ANY STREET, ANY CITY, STATE 00000-0000

4 Xcel Energy Telephone Number: 800-555-1234

5 Billing Summary Table:

Category	Amount	Previous Month	Current Month
6 Previous Month Balance	100.00	100.00	100.00
7 Amount Paid	0.00	0.00	0.00
8 Current Month Balance	100.00	100.00	100.00
9 Current Month Usage	100.00	100.00	100.00
10 Other Charges	0.00	0.00	0.00

11 Current Charges Table:

Category	Amount	Rate	Usage
12 Monthly Charge	100.00	100.00	100.00
13 Energy Charge	100.00	100.00	100.00
14 State Charge	100.00	100.00	100.00
15 City Charge	100.00	100.00	100.00
16 Other Charge	100.00	100.00	100.00
17 Total Current Charges	100.00	100.00	100.00

18 Other Charges: 10 0.00

19 Xcel Energy: 1234 ANY STREET, ANY CITY, STATE 00000-0000

20 Account: 0000-000-0000

21 Billing Date: 10-00-00

22 Payment Due: 10-00-00

23 Amount Due: 1000.00

24 Billing Cycle: 10-00-00

25 Billing Date: 10-00-00

15. Present and previous meter reading dates, number of days between the two dates, and present and previous readings; Difference between the meter readings is amount of electricity you used during the billing period
16. The reason we were unable to obtain a meter reading and had to estimate the current reading
17. When we must estimate bills, we base them on past use
18. Fixed monthly fee to help pay the cost of bringing service to you
19. Amount of electricity you used
20. The price we charge per kilowatt-hour (KW/H)
21. State and city fees (where applicable)
22. Amount of current electric bill
23. The approximate date we plan to read your meter
24. Explanation of Xcel Energy's late payment charge
25. The date we prepared your bill

## DEPOSIT AND GUARANTEE REQUIREMENTS

*Xcel Energy might request a deposit from:*

- A former customer whose service we disconnected for non-payment in the last year of service.
- A customer to whom Xcel Energy has mailed or delivered three or more disconnection notices in the last year of service.
- A customer who has a delinquent Xcel Energy account that is not in dispute.
- A new customer with unknown credit history.

Failure to provide a deposit in these cases could result in disconnection or refusal of service.

If Xcel Energy requires a customer deposit, it shall not exceed one-sixth of the estimated annual bill. Xcel Energy will give the customer a receipt for the deposit. Interest earned on the deposit, from the date of deposit, is applied to the customer's account in December of each year. A customer can establish satisfactory credit after 12 consecutive months of satisfactory payments. At that time, Xcel Energy will refund the deposit, plus accrued interest. If service is terminated before credit is established, Xcel Energy will apply the deposit, plus interest, to the final bill and will refund any balance.

Xcel Energy may accept from residential customers a written guarantee of payment from another party in place of a deposit. For commercial customers, we may require a letter of credit or surety bond. Commercial customers also may be able to negotiate some other option with the company.

Residential and commercial customers may choose an early payment schedule in lieu of a deposit. Under this schedule, the customer pays each monthly bill within a maximum of five working days from the date of receipt. Xcel Energy may require customers to stay on this schedule until they establish satisfactory payment records. Upon evidence of unsatisfactory credit, the method of establishing credit becomes the company's choice.

## CITY TAXES

Certain cities in Xcel Energy's service area require a city tax. It is a percentage of your monthly bill and we show it as a separate item. Xcel Energy collects the tax and pays it to the city.

## LATE PAYMENT CHARGE

Xcel Energy assesses a late payment charge if we do not receive full payment by the date due. We will charge 1 percent of the unpaid portion and add the charge to the next month's bill.

## RETURNED CHECK CHARGE

Xcel Energy charges for any payment by check or draft not honored or returned by a financial institution.

## COLLECTION AND NOTICE PROCEDURES AND RECONNECT CHARGE

The current portion of your utility bill is due no later than the payment date shown on the bill. If the amount due is not paid by the next billing date, your next bill could contain a late payment charge and an **Important Notice**. It would advise you that your account is past due and that Xcel Energy may shut off your utility service unless the total amount of the bill is paid in full by the due date shown on the bill. If you have received an **Important Notice** and do not make a payment or arrangements for payment by the due date, we will send a **Disconnection Notice**. This is the final notice Xcel Energy sends before disconnecting your service for non-payment. If it becomes necessary to disconnect your service for nonpayment, there is a reconnection charge.

## DISCONNECTION NOTICE

If you receive a **Disconnection Notice**, to avoid the possibility of having your service shut off, you must pay it before the date it is due or make satisfactory arrangements with Xcel Energy. You have the right to pay a delinquent bill at any time prior to disconnection. The due date of a **Disconnection Notice** is 10 working days after Xcel Energy mails it to you.

Xcel Energy may waive the bill's due date and **Disconnection Notice** in cases of fraud or illegal use, or when there are clear indications that the customer is preparing to move. Then the bill becomes due and payable immediately.

The due date of a **Disconnection Notice** takes priority and should not be ignored, even if a bill is received later.

8-1-00-NOV-8

If paying by mail, use the return envelope we provide for that purpose and include the top portion of the notice and your check or money order. Mail it at least five days before the due date.

*Conditions Necessary for Disconnection of Service:*

The following conditions must also occur before disconnection:

- Xcel Energy will disconnect only the class of service that is delinquent.
- Written notice will note the customer's right to appeal and where to appeal.
- The customer is unwilling to enter into a reasonable arrangement to pay a delinquent account.
- No bona fide or just dispute exists concerning the account. A dispute shall not be defined as bona fide and just if a customer does not pay the undisputed portion of the account and does not, after notice of the right to do so, contact the PUC with the unresolved dispute within 10 working days after the disconnection notice transmittal date.

*Notices of Disconnection*

Disconnection notices contain the date on or after which disconnection will occur, the reason for disconnection, how to avoid disconnection, a notice of the customer's right to appeal to the PUC, and if the reason for disconnection is nonpayment of bills, a notice that credit arrangements can be made. **Xcel Energy prints disconnection notices on customer bills.**

*Disconnection Procedures*

Xcel Energy will not disconnect service on any Friday, Saturday, Sunday or legal holiday, or at any time when its business offices or the South Dakota PUC offices are not open.

If there is a landlord/tenant relationship and the meter is in the landlord's name, Xcel Energy will offer the tenant the opportunity to apply for service in his or her name prior to disconnection. Xcel Energy will not attempt to recover payment from a tenant for bills or charges the landlord owes, nor will it condition service to a tenant on the basis of bills or charges the landlord owes.

Xcel Energy will not disconnect service between Nov. 1 and March 31 without adding another 30 days to the normal disconnection date. We will notify the customer,

before the normal disconnection date, of the additional 30 days.

*Reason for Disconnection or Refusal of Service*

Xcel Energy is reluctant to disconnect or refuse service, but there are situations that require it. They include:

- Nonpayment of a delinquent account.
- Failure to meet Xcel Energy credit requirements or to pay a deposit.
- Failure to make proper application for service. A proper application includes correct information about your past utility service, previous address and employment.
- Failure to allow Xcel Energy access to its equipment located on the customer's premises for inspection, meter reading, maintenance or replacement of equipment.
- Violation of Xcel Energy rules on file with the PUC. These rules are available for inspection at Xcel Energy's Sioux Falls office and the PUC office in Pierre.
- Breach of service contract or failure to furnish information or equipment necessary to obtain service.
- Unauthorized diversion of utility service and unauthorized use of, or tampering with, Xcel Energy service equipment.
- A condition hazardous to the customer, or other Xcel Energy customers, to Xcel Energy's equipment or to the public.

*You cannot be Refused Service*

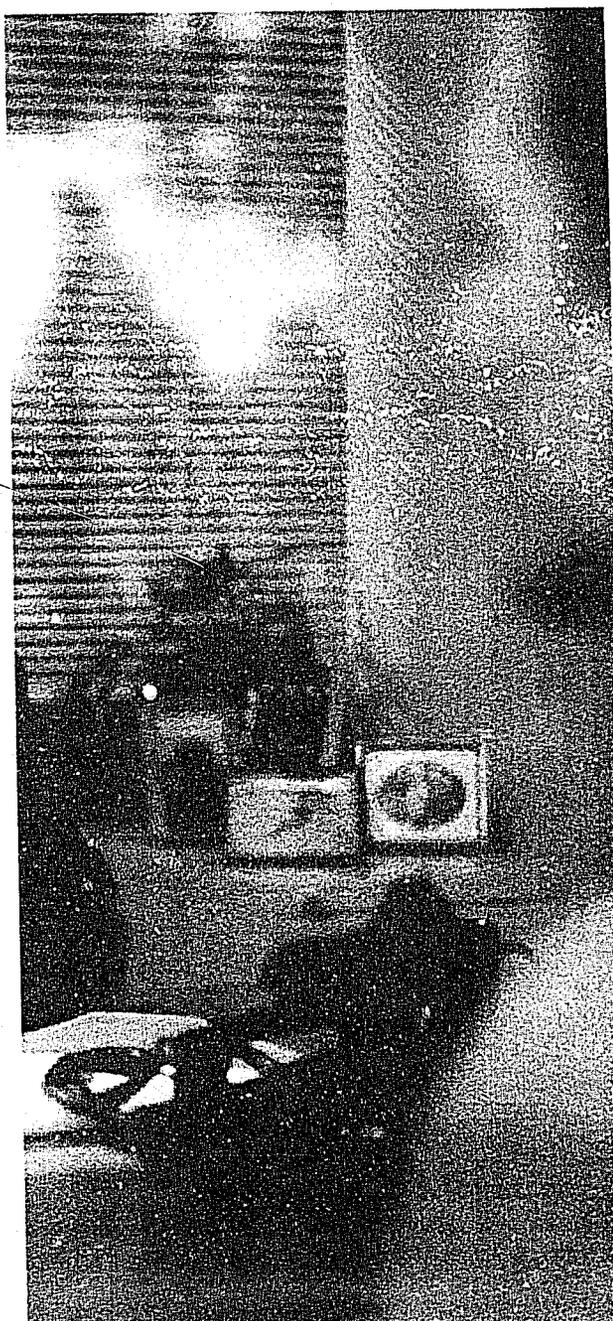
- Because of indebtedness to another utility or a debt for another class of service.
- For nonpayment of a bill for which you are a guarantor.
- Because the former occupant was delinquent.
- If you are living with someone indebted to the utility, in an attempt to force payment of that indebtedness, except in the same "indebted household" situation.

*You Cannot be Disconnected for:*

- Failure to pay for merchandise or special services purchased from Xcel Energy.
- Failure to pay for a different class of service received at a different location.

## DISPUTED BILLS

A dispute concerning your bill or service might occur. If it does, you should immediately call the Xcel Energy customer service center. In most cases, we can resolve the dispute at that time. If not, Xcel Energy will investigate the dispute, tell you what we discover and try to reach a solution. If we cannot resolve the dispute, Xcel Energy will not disconnect your service if you pay the undisputed portion of the bill and appeal to the PUC for resolution of the dispute within 10 working days after we send you a disconnection notice.



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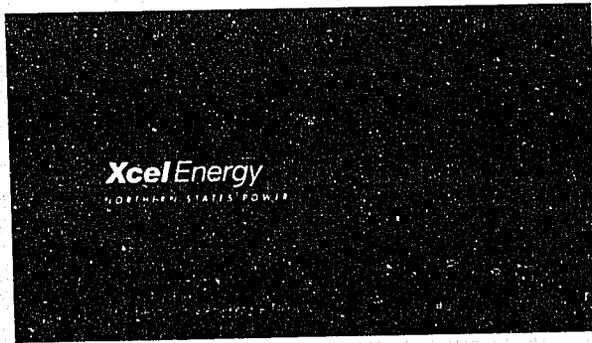
### EMERGENCIES, INQUIRIES AND COMPLAINTS

To report an emergency or make an inquiry or complaint to Xcel Energy, please call the appropriate number listed below. Normal office hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday, except holidays.

<i>24-Hour Customer Service</i>	<i>1-800-895-4995</i>
<i>Lights Out/Downed Lines</i>	<i>1-800-895-1995</i>
<i>TTY/TDD (Hearing Impaired Services)</i>	<i>1-800-895-2995</i>
<i>Internet</i>	<i>www.xcelenergy.com</i>

The South Dakota Public Utilities Commission regulates Xcel Energy, which is committed to equitable and nondiscriminatory application of its policies to all customer and applicants. The Commission is available for mediation and appeal.

*South Dakota Public Utilities Commission  
500 E. Capitol Ave.  
Pierre, SD 57501-5076  
1-605-773-3201 or 1-800-332-1782*



South Dakota Public Utilities Commission

**WEEKLY FILINGS**

For the Period of November 22, 2001 through November 28, 2001

If you need a complete copy of a filing faxed, overnight expressed, or mailed to you, please contact Delaine Kolbo within five business days of this filing. Phone: 605-773-3705 Fax: 605-773-3809

**CONSUMER COMPLAINTS**

**CT01-053** In the Matter of the Complaint filed by Jensen Rock & Sand, Mobridge, South Dakota, against MCI WorldCom Regarding Unauthorized Billing for Services.

Complainant alleges MCI billed the company for three months and MCI was not authorized to provide long distance services. Complainant requests a refund/credit of \$121.69 in unauthorized charges and wants the account closed. Complainant requests \$1000.00 as compensation for its inconvenience and requests the PUC fine MCI WorldCom for its conduct.

Staff Analyst: Charlene Lund  
Staff Attorney: Karen Cremer  
Date Docketed: 11/26/01  
Intervention Deadline: NA

**CT01-054** In the Matter of the Complaint filed by Alan Sarver, Rapid City, South Dakota, against Qwest Corporation Regarding Delayed Service.

Complainant states that in May 2001, he contacted Qwest to transfer his service and was given a due date of November 8, 2001. On November 7, 2001, Complainant contacted Qwest to verify that his service would be connected on November 8, 2001. Qwest informed him that his service would be connected on November 8, 2001. Complainant moved his business to his new location and Qwest did not connect his service on November 8, 2001. After Complainant contacted the PUC he was given a new due date for service of November 14, 2001. Complainant's service was not connected on November 14, 2001. Qwest then informed Complainant that it would be an additional 10 days before service would be connected. Complainant contacted the PUC again and his service was connected on November 15, 2001. Complainant states that had Qwest told him that they could not provide him service on November 8, 2001, he would not have moved his business. Complainant is unable to determine how much business he has been unable to obtain because he did not have phone, fax and internet service. Complainant did receive a fax on November 16, 2001, from the State of South Dakota indicating that Complainant was not in compliance with his contract since he was unable to be contacted by telephone and that he was in jeopardy of losing a \$250,000.00 contract if they did not hear from him. Complainant feels that the Commission should assess a fine to Qwest for \$100,000.00 for its poor service and for the delay in his service.

Staff Analyst: Mary Healy  
Staff Attorney: Kelly Frazier  
Date Docketed: 11/26/01  
Intervention Deadline: N/A

**ELECTRIC**

**EL01-029** In the Matter of the Filing by Xcel Energy for Approval of its New Customer Brochure.

Application by Xcel Energy for approval of revised customer information brochure including updating the bill format, deleting references to Northern States Power, updating phone numbers to toll free numbers

and deleting references to the ASK NSP program which has been discontinued.

Staff Analyst: Charlene Lund / Dave Jacobson  
Staff Attorney: Kelly Frazier  
Date Docketed: 11/27/01  
Intervention Deadline: 12/07/01

**EL01-030**      **In the Matter of the Filing for Approval of an Electric Service Territory Agreement between Lake Region Electric Association, Inc. and Otter Tail Power Company.**

On November 28, 2001, Lake Region Electric Association, Inc. (LREA) filed a petition for approval of an electric service territory agreement with Otter Tail Power Company (OTP). In the agreement OTP authorized LREA to provide service to a new customer located in OTP's service territory.

Staff Analyst: Michele Farris  
Staff Attorney: Karen Cremer  
Date Docketed: 11/28/01  
Intervention Deadline: 12/06/01

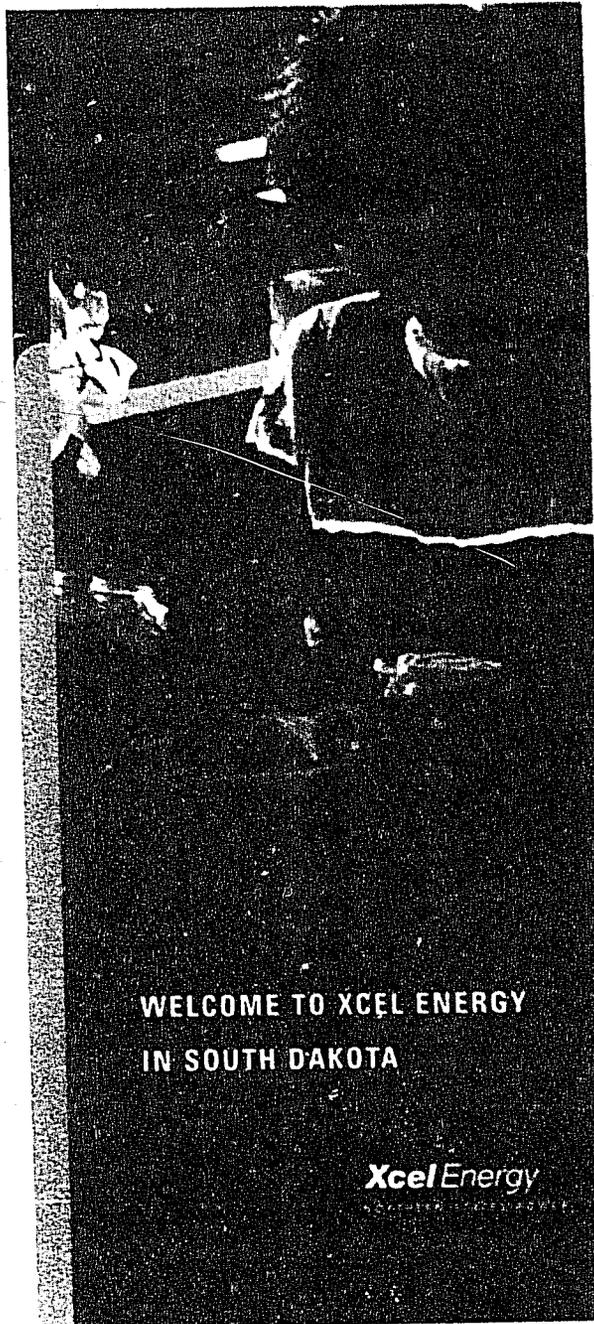
**EL01-031**      **In the Matter of the Filing for Approval of an Electric Service Territory Agreement between West River Electric Association, Inc. and Black Hills Power.**

On November 28, 2001, West River Electric Association (WREA) filed a petition for approval of an electric service territory agreement with Black Hills Power (BHP). In the agreement WREA authorized BHP to provide service to a "frozen" WREA customer, BH Greyhound Racing, located in BHP's service territory.

Staff Analyst: Michele Farris  
Staff Attorney: Karen Cremer  
Date Docketed: 11/28/01  
Intervention Deadline: 12/06/01

You may receive this listing and other PUC publications via our website or via internet e-mail.  
You may subscribe or unsubscribe to the PUC mailing lists at <http://www.state.sd.us/puc/>

ELOI-029

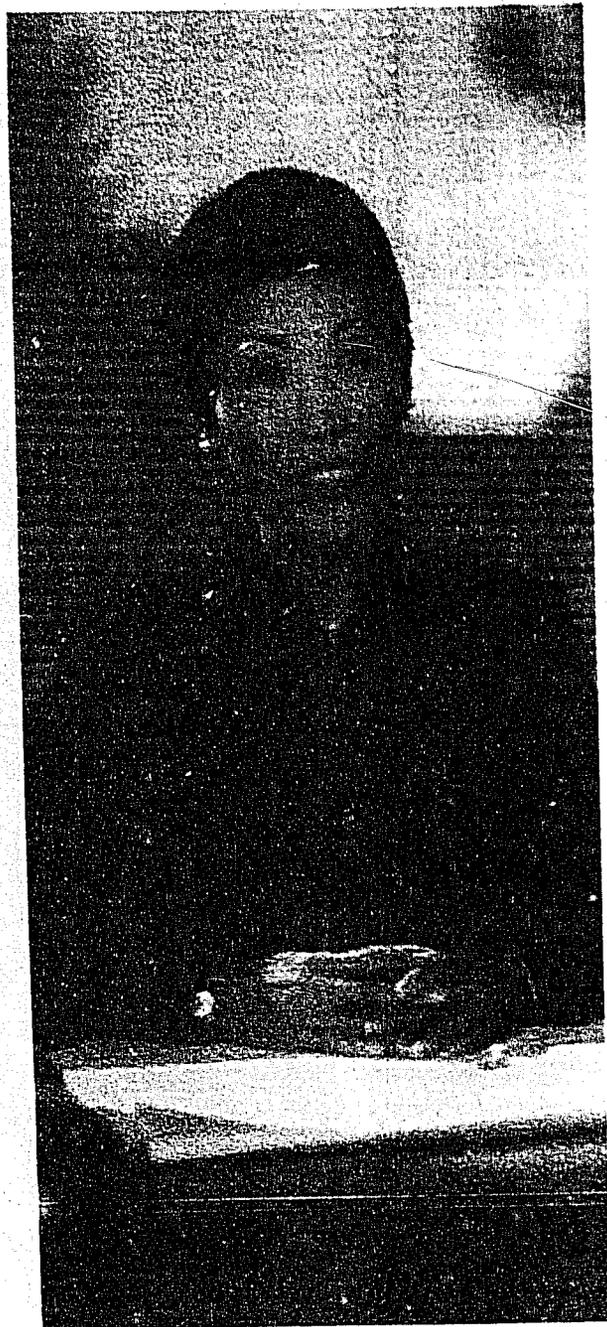


WELCOME TO XCEL ENERGY  
IN SOUTH DAKOTA

**Xcel** Energy

EXCEL ENERGY COMPANY

816625:15



## WELCOME TO XCEL ENERGY

It's our pleasure to serve you as a customer, and we look forward to providing you with reliable, low-cost electricity. We've been providing energy services for our customers for more than 80 years.

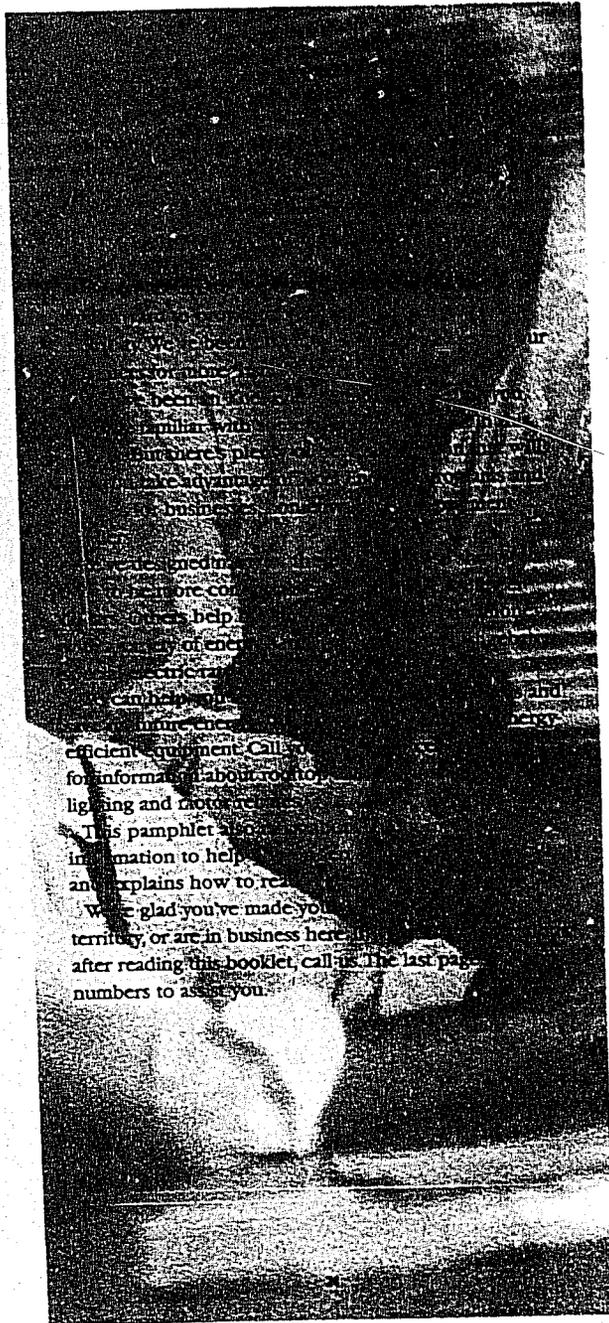
If you've been an Xcel Energy customer before, you might be familiar with some of the information in this booklet. But there's plenty of new information that will help you take advantage of Xcel Energy's programs and services for businesses, homeowners and apartment dwellers.

We've designed many of these programs to show you how to be more comfortable in your home for fewer dollars. Other programs help businesses save energy and money with a variety of energy services that include cash rebates, special electric rates and expert advice.

We can help you reduce your upfront capital costs and save on future energy bills by offering rebates for qualifying energy-efficient equipment. Call the Xcel Energy Business Solution Center at 1-800-481-4700.

This pamphlet also talks about safety, includes information to help you understand and pay your bill, and explains how to read your bill and meter.

We're glad you've made your home in Xcel Energy territory, or are in business here. If you still have questions after reading this booklet, call our customer Service Center at 1-800-895-4999. The back cover lists phone numbers to assist you.



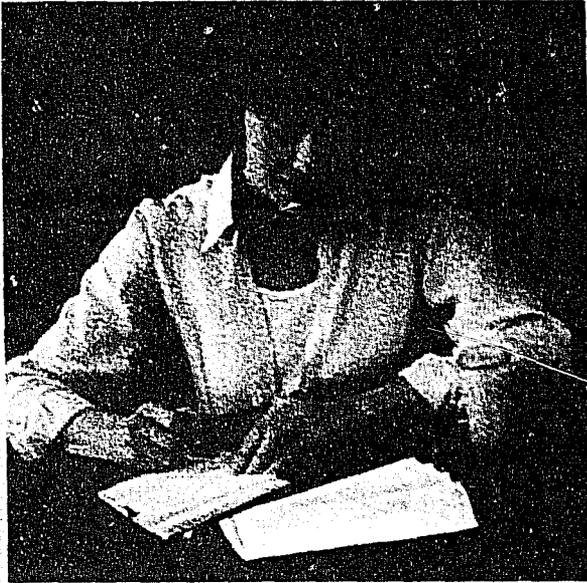
...we're pleased to  
...for more information  
...decision  
...familiar with  
...business  
...efficient equipment. Call  
...for information about  
...lighting and motor  
...This pamphlet  
...information to help  
...and explains how to  
...We're glad you've made your  
...territory, or are in business here  
...after reading this booklet, call the last page  
...numbers to assist you.

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### PAYING YOUR ELECTRIC BILL

The name printed on the envelope is the one Xcel Energy will bill for utility service. If it is incorrect, please call the Xcel Energy Customer Service Center or the Business Solutions Center.

You can pay your bill by mail, using the return envelope enclosed with your bill and including the top portion of the bill. Please give us five working days to receive the payment and credit your account. For convenient drop-off locations near you in Sioux Falls, call the Xcel Energy Service Center at 1-800-895-4999.

Xcel Energy's AutoPay plan is available for your convenience. You can authorize your financial institution to pay your Xcel Energy bill automatically every month. If you're interested, check with your financial institution or call the Customer Service Center or Business Solutions Center.

Averaged Monthly Payment smooths out your energy bill and makes them predictable, so you can plan for them. It helps you avoid high seasonal bills by spreading your payments over 12 months.

Signing up for Averaged Monthly Payment is simple. You can fill out the cards we send periodically with your bills or you can call the Customer Service Center.

### IF YOU'RE HAVING TROUBLE PAYING YOUR BILL

If paying your Xcel Energy bill is extremely difficult, call the Customer Service Center at 1-800-895-4999 or the Business Solutions Center at 1-800-481-4700 right away. We want to work with you to make sure you receive every possible assistance.

#### HEATSHARE

This program, administered by the Salvation Army, helps those in need to stay warm in winter through cash grants. Xcel Energy and its customers, employees and shareholders support HeatShare with personal donations and annual grants to cover expenses. If you or someone you know needs help, please call the Customer Service Center.

#### Community Church Crisis Fund

This community cooperative works to help customers retain their service when paying energy bills is difficult.

#### South Dakota Winter Rule

Under South Dakota's winter rule, from Nov. 1 to March 31, a residential customer is allowed an additional 30 days beyond the normal disconnection date to pay a past due bill. If you do get a disconnection notice, call the Customer Service Center as soon as possible to make arrangements on your bill.

#### Medical Extension

If loss of power will aggravate an existing medical condition, customers can extend the date of disconnection for a single 30-day period from the date of a physician's certificate or notice from a public health or social services official stating that a medical emergency exists.

### ELECTRIC PRICES

The South Dakota Public Utilities Commission (PUC) regulates investor-owned electric utilities, such as Xcel Energy, and approves the prices we charge our customers for electric service. A folder explaining the rates that apply to you accompanies this customer information booklet. We will send you a new rate schedule if these prices change.

If paying by mail, use the return envelope we provide for that purpose and include the top portion of the notice and your check or money order. Mail it at least five days before the due date.

#### *Conditions Necessary for Disconnection of Service:*

The following conditions must also occur before disconnection:

- Xcel Energy will disconnect only the class of service that is delinquent.
- Written notice will note the customer's right to appeal and where to appeal.
- The customer is unwilling to enter into a reasonable arrangement to pay a delinquent account.
- No bona fide or just dispute exists concerning the account. A dispute shall not be defined as bona fide and just if a customer does not pay the undisputed portion of the account and does not, after notice of the right to do so, contact the PUC with the unresolved dispute within 10 working days after the disconnection notice transmittal date.

#### *Notices of Disconnection*

Disconnection notices contain the date on or after which disconnection will occur, the reason for disconnection, how to avoid disconnection, a notice of the customer's right to appeal to the PUC, and if the reason for disconnection is nonpayment of bills, a notice that credit arrangements can be made. Xcel Energy prints disconnection notices on customer bills.

#### *Disconnection Procedures*

Xcel Energy will not disconnect service on any Friday, Saturday, Sunday or legal holiday, or at any time when its business offices or the South Dakota PUC offices are not open.

If there is a landlord/tenant relationship and the meter is in the landlord's name, Xcel Energy will offer the tenant the opportunity to apply for service in his or her name prior to disconnection. Xcel Energy will not attempt to recover payment from a tenant for bills or charges the landlord owes, nor will it condition service to a tenant on the basis of bills or charges the landlord owes.

Xcel Energy will not disconnect service between Nov. 1 and March 31 without adding another 30 days to the normal disconnection date. We will notify the customer,

before the normal disconnection date, of the additional 30 days.

#### *Reason for Disconnection or Refusal of Service*

Xcel Energy is reluctant to disconnect or refuse service, but there are situations that require it. They include:

- Nonpayment of a delinquent account.
- Failure to meet Xcel Energy credit requirements or to pay a deposit.
- Failure to make proper application for service. A proper application includes correct information about your past utility service, previous address and employment.
- Failure to allow Xcel Energy access to its equipment located on the customer's premises for inspection, meter reading, maintenance or replacement of equipment.
- Violation of Xcel Energy rules on file with the PUC. These rules are available for inspection at Xcel Energy's Sioux Falls office and the PUC office in Pierre.
- Breach of service contract or failure to furnish information or equipment necessary to obtain service.
- Unauthorized diversion of utility service and unauthorized use of, or tampering with, Xcel Energy service equipment.
- A condition hazardous to the customer, or other Xcel Energy customers, to Xcel Energy's equipment or to the public.

#### *You cannot be Refused Service*

- Because of indebtedness to another utility or a debt for another class of service.
- For nonpayment of a bill for which you are a guarantor.
- Because the former occupant was delinquent.
- If you are living with someone indebted to the utility, in an attempt to force payment of that indebtedness, except in the same "indebted household" situation.

#### *You Cannot be Disconnected for:*

- Failure to pay for merchandise or special services purchased from Xcel Energy.
- Failure to pay for a different class of service received at a different location.

## DEPOSIT AND GUARANTEE REQUIREMENTS

*Xcel Energy might request a deposit from:*

- A former customer whose service we disconnected for non-payment in the last year of service.
- A customer to whom Xcel Energy has mailed or delivered three or more disconnection notices in the last year of service.
- A customer who has a delinquent Xcel Energy account that is not in dispute.
- A new customer with unknown credit history.

Failure to provide a deposit in these cases could result in disconnection or refusal of service.

If Xcel Energy requires a customer deposit, it shall not exceed one-sixth of the estimated annual bill. Xcel Energy will give the customer a receipt for the deposit. Interest earned on the deposit, from the date of deposit, is applied to the customer's account in December of each year. A customer can establish satisfactory credit after 12 consecutive months of satisfactory payments. At that time, Xcel Energy will refund the deposit, plus accrued interest. If service is terminated before credit is established, Xcel Energy will apply the deposit, plus interest, to the final bill and will refund any balance.

Xcel Energy may accept from residential customers a written guarantee of payment from another party in place of a deposit. For commercial customers, we may require a letter of credit or surety bond. Commercial customers also may be able to negotiate some other option with the company.

Residential and commercial customers may choose an early payment schedule in lieu of a deposit. Under this schedule, the customer pays each monthly bill within a maximum of five working days from the date of receipt. Xcel Energy may require customers to stay on this schedule until they establish satisfactory payment records. Upon evidence of unsatisfactory credit, the method of establishing credit becomes the company's choice.

## CITY TAXES

Certain cities in Xcel Energy's service area require a city tax. It is a percentage of your monthly bill and we show it as a separate item. Xcel Energy collects the tax and pays it to the city.

## LATE PAYMENT CHARGE

Xcel Energy assesses a late payment charge if we do not receive full payment by the date due. We will charge 1 percent of the unpaid portion and add the charge to the next month's bill.

## RETURNED CHECK CHARGE

Xcel Energy charges for any payment by check or draft not honored or returned by a financial institution.

## COLLECTION AND NOTICE PROCEDURES AND RECONNECT CHARGE

The current portion of your utility bill is due no later than the payment date shown on the bill. If the amount due is not paid by the next billing date, your next bill could contain a late payment charge and an **Important Notice**. It would advise you that your account is past due and that Xcel Energy may shut off your utility service unless the total amount of the bill is paid in full by the due date shown on the bill. If you have received an **Important Notice** and do not make a payment or arrangements for payment by the due date, we will send a **Disconnection Notice**. This is the final notice Xcel Energy sends before disconnecting your service for non-payment. If it becomes necessary to disconnect your service for nonpayment, there is a reconnection charge.

## DISCONNECTION NOTICE

If you receive a **Disconnection Notice**, to avoid the possibility of having your service shut off, you must pay it before the date it is due or make satisfactory arrangements with Xcel Energy. You have the right to pay a delinquent bill at any time prior to disconnection. The due date of a **Disconnection Notice** is 10 working days after Xcel Energy mails it to you.

Xcel Energy may waive the bill's due date and **Disconnection Notice** in cases of fraud or illegal use, or when there are clear indications that the customer is preparing to move. Then the bill becomes due and payable immediately.

The due date of a **Disconnection Notice** takes priority and should not be ignored, even if a bill is received later.

## ADDITIONAL IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR XCEL ENERGY CUSTOMERS

On the following pages you will find information about your Xcel Energy bill and these important categories:

- Your Xcel Energy bill
- Deposit and guarantee requirements
- City taxes
- Late payment charge
- Returned check charge
- Collection procedures and reconnect charge
- Notices of disconnection
- Disputed bills
- Emergencies, Inquiries and Complaints

### YOUR XCEL ENERGY BILL

Once a month, Xcel Energy sends you a bill for the electricity you used during the billing period, generally every 30 days. You can expect to receive your bill about the same time each month. If the billing period is longer or shorter than normal, we calculate your bill on a pro-rated basis. Please have your account number ready if you call about your account or service.

Each bill contains the following information:

1. Your personal 10-digit account number
2. Date bill is due
3. Amount due
4. The Xcel Energy telephone number and mailing address if you have questions about your bill
5. Kind of service
6. Amount of previous month's balance
7. Amount paid on previous month's balance
8. Balance as of current billing date
9. The cost of Xcel Energy electricity you used this month
10. Amount of other authorized charges, such as HeatShare pledge
11. The current bill plus any balance remaining from previous bills
12. Location of special messages
13. Comparison of energy use and weather
14. Your meter number

The image shows a sample Xcel Energy bill with 25 numbered callouts pointing to specific areas:

- 1: Account Number
- 2: Date Bill is Due
- 3: Amount Due
- 4: Xcel Energy Contact Information
- 5: Service Type
- 6: Previous Month's Balance
- 7: Amount Paid on Previous Month's Balance
- 8: Current Billing Date Balance
- 9: Current Month's Electricity Cost
- 10: Other Authorized Charges
- 11: Total Current Bill
- 12: Special Messages
- 13: Energy Use and Weather Comparison
- 14: Meter Number
- 15: Meter Readings and Reading Dates
- 16: Reason for Estimated Reading
- 17: Past Use Basis
- 18: Fixed Monthly Fee
- 19: Electricity Used (KWH)
- 20: Price per KWH
- 21: State and City Fees
- 22: Current Electric Bill
- 23: Approximate Meter Reading Date
- 24: Late Payment Charge Explanation
- 25: Bill Preparation Date

15. Present and previous meter readings and reading dates; the number of days between the two dates. The difference between the meter readings is the amount of electricity you used during the billing period
16. The reason we were unable to obtain a meter reading and had to estimate the current reading
17. When we must estimate bills, we base them on past use
18. Fixed monthly fee to help pay the cost of bringing service to you
19. Amount of electricity you used
20. The price we charge per kilowatt-hour (KWH)
21. State and city fees (where applicable)
22. Amount of current electric bill
23. The approximate date we plan to read your meter
24. Explanation of Xcel Energy's late payment charge
25. The date we prepared your bill

## WHAT TO DO WHEN THE LIGHTS GO OUT

If your lights go out, first check with your neighbors or nearby businesses to see if they have electricity. If you are the only one without power, the cause might be a blown fuse or circuit breaker, and you might be able to take care of the problem yourself. Keep extra fuses on hand. Xcel Energy will replace fuses and reset circuit breakers, but there is a charge for the service call.

If your entire neighborhood is without service, the problem is probably on Xcel Energy lines. Please let us know immediately by calling the Xcel Energy LIGHTS OUT number at 1-800-895-1999. We will send a repair crew as soon as possible to find the problem and repair it.

Power outages are not frequent, but they do happen, and you can be ready for them with a supply of candles, matches and a flashlight. A camping light might come in handy.

## REMEMBER TO STAY AWAY FROM DOWNED WIRES

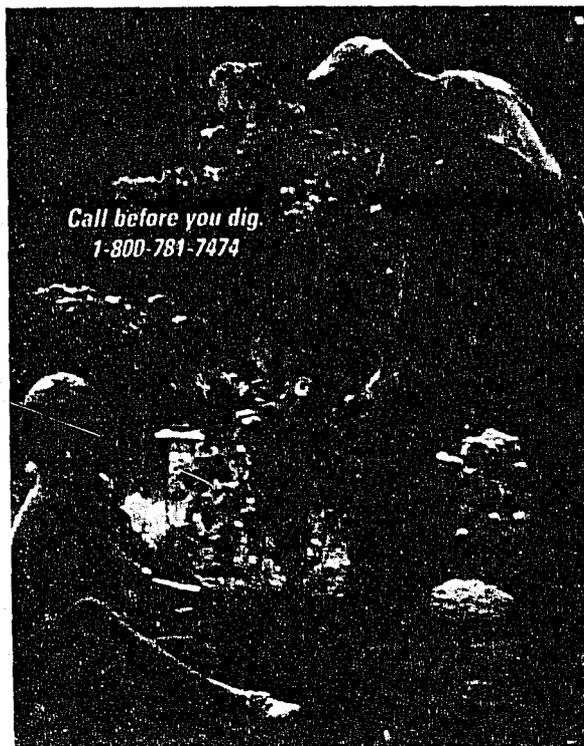
Xcel Energy employees are on duty around the clock, seven days a week to keep your electricity on. Outages aren't usually lengthy. However, major storms can result in thousands of customers losing their service and hundreds of employees working to restore service.

Repair work is often difficult and must be done under adverse field conditions. It also is very complex receiving literally thousands of telephone calls, sorting them, determining probable causes and dispatching crews.

After a severe storm, it might take days to restore service.

If it appears we won't be able to restore your service for an extended time, here are some ways you can help:

- Don't open refrigerators or freezers more often than necessary.
- Wrap refrigerators and freezers in heavy blankets to delay thawing.
- Turn off or unplug major appliances to help avoid a sudden surge of power when service is restored.
- Unplug appliances with transistors.
- Leave a light on so you'll know when your power is restored.



*Call before you dig*  
*1-800-781-7474*

- If you see a downed electric wire, stay away from it and call Xcel Energy at 1-800-895-1999 to let us know where it is. It will help us to restore your electricity more quickly.

## WORKING SAFELY AROUND POWER LINES

Don't take power lines for granted. Be very careful when you work near or around them. Never allow a ladder, antenna, aluminum siding, rain gutters or other objects to touch electric wires. **Be Safe. Call Xcel Energy.**

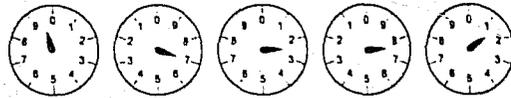
When you're digging, call first to find out exactly where underground electric lines are located. Striking or severing lines with a shovel or other tool is dangerous. It could injure or even kill you. You also could interrupt service to your home. Damages caused by customers who do not call before digging are paid for by the customer. In South Dakota, you can call South Dakota ONE-CALL at 1-800-781-7474 to locate underground utility lines.

## READING YOUR METER

Many areas of Xcel Energy's service territory have automated meter reading. However, if your home is not in one of those areas, Xcel Energy will read your meter each month, as close as possible to 30-day intervals. If the reader cannot read your meter, we will leave a form with instructions so you can read your own meter and call in your reading. If you choose not to read your meter, or if the reading reaches us too late, we will estimate your bill based on your past use.

By learning to read your meter, you can track how much electricity you're using and estimate your use.

You can easily read an electric meter. Simply read from left to right on the dials, and record the number that each



dial pointer has just passed. If the pointer is between two numbers, record the smaller one.

On the dials above, the reading is 97271. We determine the amount of energy you have used by subtracting the previous reading from the current one.

An electric meter registers your energy use in kilowatt-hours (kWh).

Xcel Energy must read your meter at least once a year. If you wish, we can send you an 11-month supply of the meter-reading forms. Or, you can provide us with a key so we can enter and read your meter when you aren't home. Call us at 1-800-895-4999 to make arrangements and learn about measures we take to ensure that your key is safe.

## METER TESTING

Xcel Energy conducts a regular program of periodic meter testing, and you are entitled to one free meter test a year. Additional testing may require you to pay a deposit, which we will refund if we find the meter is in error.



## TO START OR STOP SERVICE

You can start or stop service with a simple phone call to the customer service number 1-800-895-4999. Xcel Energy charges the first time service is established or when it's reestablished. There is only one charge for any combination of electric services that Xcel Energy connects or reconnects at one time.

## CONSERVING ELECTRICITY

There are steps you can take to save energy and to help reduce your electric bill. They include caulking and weather stripping around doors and windows, lowering the setting on your thermostat in the winter and raising it in the summer, using cold or warm water for washing, and installing energy-efficient lighting.

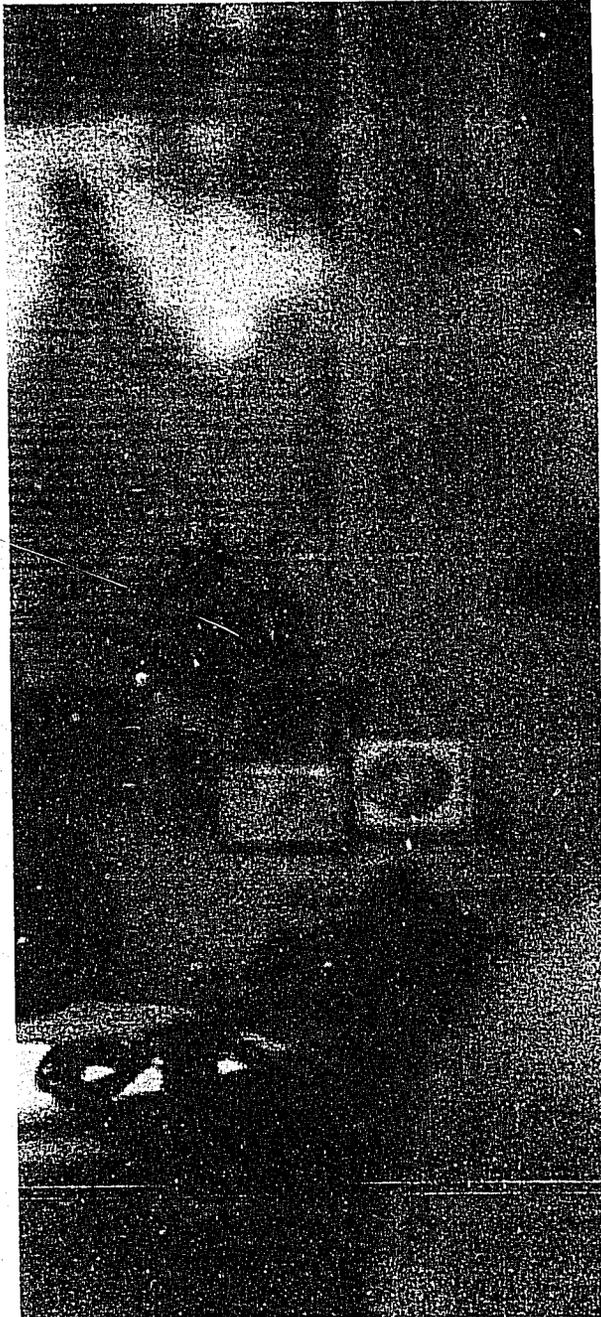
Xcel Energy has programs to help both residential and business customers cut back on energy use.

We invite you to call the Customer Service Center or the Business Solutions Center for more information.

81625923

## DISPUTED BILLS

A dispute concerning your bill or service might occur. If it does, you should immediately call the Xcel Energy customer service center. In most cases, we can resolve the dispute at that time. If not, Xcel Energy will investigate the dispute, tell you what we discover and try to reach a solution. If we cannot resolve the dispute, Xcel Energy will not disconnect your service if you pay the undisputed portion of the bill and appeal to the PUC for resolution of the dispute within 10 working days after we send you a disconnection notice.



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42505

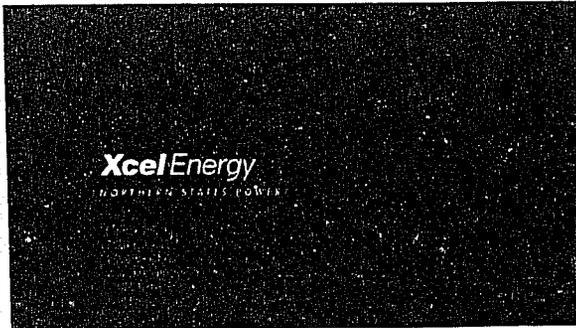
## EMERGENCIES, INQUIRIES AND COMPLAINTS

To report an emergency or make an inquiry or complaint to Xcel Energy, please call the appropriate number listed below.

<i>24-Hour Customer Service</i>	<i>1-800-895-4999</i>
<i>Lights Out/Downed Lines</i>	<i>1-800-895-1999</i>
<i>TTY/TDD (Hearing Impaired Services)</i>	<i>1-800-895-4949</i>
<i>Internet</i>	<i>www.xcelenergy.com</i>

The South Dakota Public Utilities Commission regulates Xcel Energy, which is committed to equitable and nondiscriminatory application of its policies to all customer and applicants. The Commission is available for mediation and appeal.

*South Dakota Public Utilities Commission  
500 E. Capitol Ave.  
Pierre, SD 57501-5070  
1-605-773-3201 or 1-800-332-1782*



BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION  
OF THE STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA

IN THE MATTER OF THE FILING BY XCEL )  
ENERGY FOR APPROVAL OF ITS NEW )  
CUSTOMER BROCHURE )  
)

ORDER GRANTING  
APPROVAL, SUBJECT TO  
REVISIONS  
EL01-029

On November 27, 2001, Xcel Energy (Xcel) filed with the South Dakota Public Utilities Commission (Commission) its new customer brochure. The new customer brochure will reflect updating the bill format, deleting references to Northern States Power, updating phone numbers to toll free numbers and deleting references to the ASK NSP program which has been discontinued. On December 10, 2001, Xcel filed further revisions.

At its regularly scheduled meeting of December 12, 2001, the Commission considered Xcel's request for approval of its new customer brochure. Commission Staff recommended approval.

The Commission finds that it has jurisdiction over this matter pursuant to SDCL Chapter 49-34A, specifically, 49-34A-3, 49-34A-4, 49-34A-27 and ARSD 20:10:16:02. Further, the Commission finds that the new customer brochure is in the public interest, and subject to further revisions regarding insufficient fund check charges, payment locations and fees and one call information, the brochure shall be approved. It is therefore

ORDERED, that the new customer brochure is approved, as revised.

Dated at Pierre, South Dakota, this 20<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2001.

<b>CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE</b>	
The undersigned hereby certifies that this document has been served today upon all parties of record in this docket, as listed on the docket service list, by facsimile or by first class mail, in properly addressed envelopes, with charges prepaid thereon.	
By:	<u>Melvin Kalbo</u>
Date:	<u>12/21/01</u>
(OFFICIAL SEAL)	

BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION:

James A. Burg  
JAMES A. BURG, Chairman

Pam Nelson  
PAM NELSON, Commissioner